

**Testimony for H.B. 249
Submitted by: Ross Widenor
Munroe Falls City Council President
Testifying as Opponent**

Chair Thomas, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Synenberg, and members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill. My name is Ross Widenor, and I am the Council President and Ward 1 Council Member for the City of Munroe Falls. This testimony is submitted solely on my own behalf.

H.B. 249 inappropriately puts drag performances in the same category as stripping and other sexual performances, and could seemingly be enforced against anyone in a public setting wearing clothing perceived to be insufficiently aligned with the person's assumed sex assigned at birth.

Drag is art, and a form of cultural expression. If this performance is subject to this sort of ban because it does not suit some people's tastes, what else might be a target for government censorship? Do we want to be a state that dictates what its residents are permitted to wear?

For my part, I want Ohio to be a place where we are free to express ourselves, enjoy arts and cultural experiences that resonate with us, and live authentically without government intervention.

Sincerely,



Ross Widenor
City Council President
Munroe Falls, OH